

# PADDY CULTIVATION CEREMONIES IN THE FOUR KÓRALÉS, KÉGALLA DISTRICT.\*

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## THRESHING AND MEASURING PADDY.



WHEN the paddy crop is ripe and is ready for the sickle, a lucky hour is named, and the cultivator (*goyiyá*; *andakárayá*), after bathing and putting on a clean cloth and eating *kiribat*, enters the field, and at the set time cuts three ripe ears of paddy.

These, with a scrap of iron, are wrapped in three *divikaduru* leaves and are carried on his head to the threshing-floor (*kamata*).

A hole is there dug in the centre of the *kamata*, about three or four inches in depth, and the three ears and iron are buried in it. Over the hole is placed a round stone (called *mutta*) or a "king cocoanut" (*ran tembiliya*), and the *kamata* cleared of grass with a mamoty.

The crop is then reaped and stacked on the dam of the field (*keṭakandu-godakaraṇawá*). If the corn cannot be threshed

\* The subject has been so fully dealt with in previous Papers printed in the Society's Journal that this Note may appear superfluous. It is inserted merely to supplement the information contained in Mr. R. W. Ievers' Paper in the Journal for 1880, covering ground not touched therein. The Papers already written for this Society on "Paddy Cultivation Ceremonies," Sinhalese and Tamil, will be found in Journal R. A. S., C. B., Vol. VI, No. 21, 1880 (Ievers); Vol. VIII, No. 26, 1883 (Bell), and No. 29, 1884 (Lewis). See also a Paper in the Journal of the R. A. S. of Great Britain, Vol. XVII, new series, p. 366 (Le Mesurier), and the "Orientalist," Vol. 3, pp. 99-103 (Bell).

the same way for want of a lucky hour, a small dam (*liyadda*) in the field which is not damp is selected, the cocks (*kefa-kandu*) is removed there, and heaped into ricks or stacks (*waṭa-nlu*).

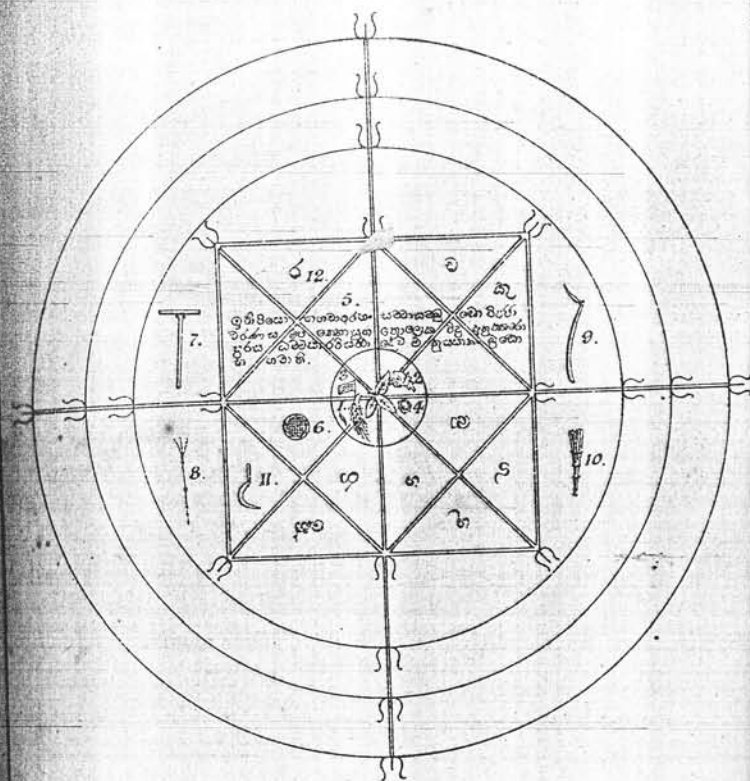
At the lucky hour for threshing (which always occurs in the evening) the paddy is taken from the *waṭa-malu* and tied into small bulles, and carried on the head to the *kamata*. Sometimes the paddy is put on the *kamata* in semi-circular shape, or, as the natives say, "like a rainbow or half-moon" (*rēna-kanda-ekakaraṇawā*); and sometimes heaped in the centre (*kolēta-ekata*) after a diagram has been drawn with ashes on the threshing-floor.

The paddy is then tossed and mixed together with hands (*kola-waḍanawa*). But if it is a large stack two "teams" of buffaloes (*dekerella*) are yoked together to thresh the paddy; otherwise one team suffices. The boys who are employed to drive the buffaloes over the paddy (*kola-maḍawanawā*, *inṭan-maḍawanawā*) are first fed. Should the animals void their dung while being driven the boys are taught to take a little straw and hold it on both the upturned palms of the hands to the sides of the buffaloes (to prevent the dung falling on the straw and fouling the paddy), and to throw it over the other side of the *wāriya-kanda*. They are very particular in this respect until the whole threshing is over.

Two or three *pē* after first driving the buffaloes over the paddy, what has worked to the edge of the threshing-floor is tossed with the *deṭi-goyiyi* or flail, on to the heap in the centre (*waṭa-kāḍanawā*), and the buffaloes again driven over it.

After threshing for sometime several men (according to the number of men employed), picking up a little straw on their flails, and placing them on their shoulders, walk round repeating the *kalawīti-kīma* or threshing-floor refrain ("Deṭi deṭi kumana deṭi," &c.), whilst the buffaloes are moving.

\* Plate I.—This diagram differs from that given by Mr. Ievers chiefly in having only three concentric circles instead of seven. Three seem so universally the number drawn that it is possible Mr. Ievers may have been misled in making his diagram contain more circles.



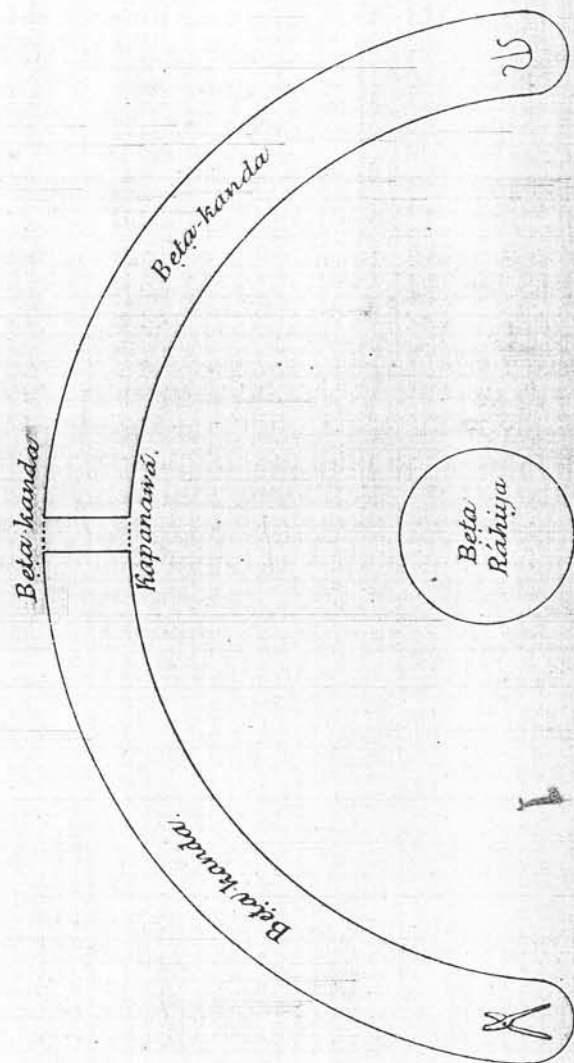
# FOUR KORALE'S, KEGALLA DISTRICT

1. Divikaduru kola (3) Goyankaral (3) Yakadakeli (1) in arakwala
2. Kalu Hakgediya
3. Kihomba lēlla
4. Muṭṭa
5. Navaguna-gāthāwa
6. Laha or Goyiya
7. Goyi-lēlla
8. Manatta
9. Uknunudēlla alias Deṭigoyiyā
10. Bolaatta
11. Deṭetta or Liyannāwa
12. First letter of each of the 9 planet names.

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FOUR KORALS



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When this is over the paddy on the borders of the threshing-floor is tossed again on to the centre heap with flails, and the buffaloes a second time driven over it (*anbaruwan-dakkanawā*), so that the corn may be threshed well. When the corn is sufficiently threshed, straw is tossed with flails (*meḍuwan-halabānawā*) on to the bank round the threshing-floor (*wāriya-kanda*).

The unthreshed corn which still remains in the centre is then finally threshed (*goyikama-lānava*), and the straw thrown on to the *wariya-kanda*. If it is a large stack there are three *meḍuwan* or preliminary tossings of the straw before the *goyikama* or threshing; if an ordinary stack two *meḍuwan*; if a very small stack one *madun* only.

After the *goyikama* the buffaloes are untied and driven away, and the paddy fanned with a *katupilla* branch to remove the chaff and other rubbish.

Next with the *poró-lēlla* the paddy is heaped up in the centre of the threshing-floor (*rāhi-karaṇawā*), and a twisted rope made of straw is put round the heap of paddy (*rāhiya*). A small quantity of ashes, small chips from the *ból-at* from the *deṭi-goyiyā*, and from the *goyi-lēlla* or *pōruwa*, and a small quantity of hair from the tails of the buffaloes (*anruwó*), are taken and wrapped in a little straw called *āndi* and kept on the top of the heap of paddy (*āndiya-tiyanaw*) and the heap of paddy covered with straw. The same day (if there is no *rikta* or unlucky hour), or the next day, the *rāhiya* is uncovered and the paddy grains spread on the *kamata* to dry, and again heaped up.

At the lucky hour the cultivator takes the winnow (*yatura*) into his hand, bows down six times before the heap of paddy, kneeling on two sides of it, and at each bowing three times (*mawamudun-waṇḍināwā*). After taking paddy from the *rāhiya* into the winnow he then spreads it on the *kamata* (*beta-garanawa*) in a line, called *beta-kanda*,\* "in the shape of a rainbow or half-moon" (*beta-kanda-bandinawā*), and



two other persons, one on each side, pass backwards and forwards down the line of paddy thus spread and winnow off chaff and dirt. Each time fresh paddy is brought and spread by the *goyiyá* on the line the fanning is repeated by the two men.

When the *ráhiya* is exhausted, with the *póruwa* the paddy on the edges of the *beta-kanda* is heaped up to the top of it (*beta-mudun-karañawá*), and other good paddy scattered about near gathered with the *póruwa* and put on it (*beta-kanda bolatiyanawá*), the rubbish and chaff being gathered and heaped separately (*ahakata bol-tiyanawá*) on the *kamata*.

After that, upon the first end of the *beta-kanda* the shape of *añduwa* (pair of pincers) is drawn on the paddy with the corner of the winnow, and at the other end a trident (*súlama*; *tri-súlama*) is drawn with the same corner of the winnow. Then taking the measure (*laha goyiyá*) into his hands, the cultivator goes to the place where the *ráhiya*, or heap of paddy, was and bows three times, and from there to the first end of the *beta-kanda*, where he again bows three times, and thence to the other end, bowing three times finally.

When this is over, holding the measure with one hand so as to just touch the paddy in the *beta-kanda*, and taking a handful of paddy in the other hand, he drops a few grains on the *laha* measure whilst carrying it round the *beta-kanda* in the first end (*beta-yállanawá*; *andun-nawanawá*).

When this is finished he cuts a passage with the *goyi-lélla* through the centre of the *beta-kanda* and through it throws *bol-atta*, *man-atta*, *pórulélla*, *katu-atta*, *ukuny-atta*, ashes, and water, from the outside; then passing through, he bows three times on either side of the passage through the *beta-kanda*, and further three times at each end of it, and commences to measure the paddy. Going to the first end of the *beta-kanda* a *laha* of paddy is measured and covered up with the winnow so that its broad part may touch the *beta-kanda*. Leaving it there he again sweeps the *kamata*. After that the *laha* measure of paddy is uncovered and set apart for the gods (*deyiyanta-tiyanawá*) and the remaining paddy is measured and heaped up.

From this heap the "seed-paddy" is measured at first. Thus, if one *péla* extent was sown, twelve *lahas* of paddy will be measured and set apart as "seed paddy." Next the Government tithe is measured: the remaining paddy is then divided between the landowner and the cultivator. From the cultivator's share another three *lahas* of paddy have to be measured and added to the twelve *lahas* of "seed paddy," making in all fifteen *lahas*. The *laha* measure of paddy set apart in the commencement is given over to the man who charmed (*ken-kara-sorá*) the paddy field.

If the land was cultivated in *anda*—i.e., for half-share—the cultivator must do all the work, including transplanting. If cultivated jointly with the landowner, the landowner should do half of the work, including half of the transplanting. If the cultivator alone transplants the paddy of the whole land he is entitled to get from the landowner half of the "seed paddy" sown on the land.

Thus, if the extent of the land is one *péla*, the cultivator, for transplanting the whole, would get five *lahas* of paddy, besides vegetables, curry-stuffs, &c.

These charges are usually paid to the cultivator by the landowner whilst the transplanting is going on, though occasionally kept back to be given after the crop is threshed.

The chaff heaped up in the *kamata* goes to the cultivator. The straw is entirely at the disposal of the landowner.